COBBETT'S WEEKLY POLITICAL REGISTER.

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" ——— So venal and vain:
" Paltry and proud, as drabs of Drury Lane."——POPE: Sat. II.

TO THE
FREE AND INDEPENDENT ELECTORS
OF THE
CITY AND LIBERTIES OF WESTMINSTER.

LETTER V.

Botley, Jan. 13, 1807.

GENTLEMEN,

Having addressed four letters to you, in the preceding volume of the Register, I call this the fifth. It is my intention to continue the series, until I have submitted to you all the observations, that shall appear to me to have a tendency to insure, at another election, the success of Mr. Paull, or of whatever other candidate, or candidates, shall be found to offer themselves as the determined supporters of our principles. But, in the letter, which I have now the honour to address to you, it will be necessary for me to confine myself to an answer to two letters published by me from the pen of a MR. FREDERICK HOMAN, who, after having applied to me to know, whether I would insert a *defence* of Mr. Sheridan against my attacks during the late contest, and after having obtained my assurance, that such insertion should be made, sent me his promised defence, in the two letters, which I have published, and which you have, probably, seen at page 1013 of the preceding volume, and at page 54 of the present.

Mr. Sheridan, in his last address to his friends, of whom Peter Moore was at the head, had said: " leave Mr. Cobbett to " himself; rely on it, there is not a man, " woman, or child, in Great Britain, who " believes one word that he says." Mr. Homan quotes this passage at the outset of his defence, and he says, that there never was an observation more just, " or fitter to " be applied and attended to;" of the *sincerity* of which opinion you will want nothing to convince you, gentlemen, when you see this very Mr. Homan applying for permission to insert *a defence* of Mr. Sheridan against the statements of this same Mr. Cobbett, which statements both of them were quite sure, that no man, woman, or child would believe! So much for their miserable affectation of contempt for me, an affectation which bears no very faint resemblance to the " damme-who's-afraid" of a dueller, when he is going trembling to the place of appointment.

But, you will ask, " who, in the name of all that is obscure, is this Mr. Frederick Homan." I, unhappily, asked the same question, some time ago, for which the subject of my question has, in his first letter, most severely, though I will not say unjustly, punished me, by imposing on me the task of conveying to the world the overflowings of his nauseous vanity, as exhibited in an account of his descent. We heard and saw enough of *high-blood*, during the election, and we will revive the subject, by-and-by, when we come to speak of *the Play-Actor's Dinner to the Sheridans*. At present, it will be best to leave Mr. Homan to the operation of those feelings, which, in your minds, will not fail to have been excited by his empty boast about superiority of blood. Personally, let us leave him in perfect charity, hoping that, whether by his scene-shifting or other means, he may always be able, like you and me, to procure an honest livelihood; and that, when old age or sickness overtake him, his high-blooded relations, may be, contrary to the practice of many of them, disposed to support him without having recourse to the purse of the public.

In *a defence* of Mr. Sheridan's conduct, during the last election, I expected, and I dare say you did, an attempt, at least, to refute the several charges, which, during that contest, and immediately after it, we had made against that gentleman, and, in the promulgating of which I had had no inconsiderable share. But, gentlemen, in place of a defence of Mr. Sheridan, Mr. Homan has made an attack upon me, and has, by such means as he is master of, made, in his second letter, divers attempts to fix upon me the charge of *inconsistency*, and the still heavier charge of *insincerity*, if not of *downright falsehood*. To be consistent, to act with sincerity, and to speak the truth; to be regarded, according to the good old phrase, as " a *true man*," by all who know or hear of me, is my highest ambition; and, I beg you to be assured, that, amongst all mankind, there is no body of men, amongst

whom I am so anxious to be thought worthy of this character, as amongst you. Thus feeling, you will, I hope, excuse me, if I trespass a few minutes upon your patience, while I prove that these charges are unfounded.

Mr. Homan, in order to shew, that, when the first vacancy for Westminster took place, I *had no objection to Mr. Sheridan as a representative of that great and enlightened city*, quotes from that address of mine to you, in which I declined standing myself, and which was published in the newspapers, under the date of 16th September, a passage, evidently, he says, intended to prevent you from electing Lord Percy, and not less evidently, of course, intended to aid Mr. Sheridan, who was, at that time, well known to be the other candidate, if there was to be any other. Mr. Homan's premises here are perfectly true; but, his conclusion, therefrom drawn, will, I am persuaded, appear to be perfectly false. My address, just mentioned, was written at, and sent from, Botley. I had been in Westminster a few days before. I had ascertained, with sorrow, that Sir Francis Burdett had insuperable objections to becoming a candidate. Next to him I thought myself the fittest man, that I could then call to mind, to represent you; because I had formed a resolution never to touch the public money as long as I lived, and because I was convinced, that, greatly deficient, in point of talent, as I might be, an ample compensation for that, would, if I had undertaken the task, been found in my industry and my zeal. I, therefore, returned home not quite decided as to what course I myself should pursue; but, that time for reflection, which, amongst many other excellent advantages, a distance from the bustle of the metropolis and the conflict of opinions and passions affords, produced the determination expressed in my address. There then remained to me a choice between Lord Percy and Mr. Sheridan, which, without any disrespect *here* implied towards either of them, was, with me, a choice of evils. Some persons, agreeing with me perfectly in all great political principles, thought, that, of the two, Lord Percy was to be prefered; because, though the choice of him would assimilate the city of Westminster with the family boroughs, the objections against Mr. Sheridan, as being a place-man and so gross a political apostate, were still more powerful. Such was, evidently, the opinion of Sir Francis Burdett, who, upon the ground of objection to Mr. Sheridan, and not of approbation of Lord Percy, hesitated not in promising his vote to the latter. My opinion was different. In objection to Mr. Sheridan I went the full length of Sir Francis Burdett; but, my objection to Lord Percy; my fear of seeing Westminster partitioned between a great family, of endless means of influence on one part, and the Treasury on the other part; my dread of seeing your voice, heretofore the instructor of the rest of the nation, the reprover of the corrupt and the encourager of the independent, the terror of evil-doers and the praise of those that did well; the dread of seeing this voice stifled *for ever*, was, with me, far greater than any apprehensions founded upon the character or conduct of Mr. Sheridan. Besides, *an election* was wanted; and, gentlemen, for there to be an election of a *new* candidate, there must be an opportunity afforded for the electors to *give their votes*, which, if Lord Percy was left to be chosen by the mere mummery of half a dozen toad-eaters, could not be the case. This doctrine, indeed, is very different from that of Mr. Sheridan, who, after having for twenty years, been bawling for such a reform as should restore to the people a frequent return of the exercise of their elective rights, talked to you about "an *election brawl*" as unsuited to the time when Mr. Fox's remains were to pass through the streets of your city; but, with me, gentlemen, the affording you an opportunity of *voting*, was a consideration, which, alone, would have induced me to support Mr. Sheridan (seeing that no other man was to be found) in opposition to Lord Percy; and, when you view this as a reason in addition to those before given, you will, I imagine, not perceive any inconsistency in my conduct, in wishing to support Mr. Sheridan in opposition to Lord Percy, and in opposing Mr. Sheridan, when he was opposed to Mr. Paull, whose principles and whose conduct were such as I most fully approved of.—— Mr. Homan says, in rather more words than were necessary, that, as soon as I found that Mr. Sheridan was not to be *forced* into a contest with Lord Percy, I began to attack him, and to censure those who passed a vote at the Crown and Anchor, on the 18th of Sept. declaring him to be the most fit person to represent the city. So I did, and was I not perfectly consistent in so doing? Had I not, before, wished you to support him *against* Lord Percy, and upon no other ground? Had he not disappointed you, and deceived you with his theatrical declamation and tears? Had he not thrown you into the hands of Lord Percy? And, did I ever, in the whole course of my life, let fall an expression encouraging the idea, that I thought him *the fittest* person to represent you? If, indeed, when I called upon you to support him in preference to Lord Percy, I had ex-

tolled his character, or his former conduct, then, I might have truly been accused of inconsistency, in afterwards reprobating that character and that conduct; but, as the facts are, and the facts that I have now stated no one can deny; as the facts are exhibited even in the garbled premises of Mr. Homan himself, his conclusion, containing the accusation, is, I am sure you will perceive, totally false.

This mention of my wish "to *force* Mr. Sheridan into a contest with Lord Percy" would, in a mind somewhat more lucid than than that of Mr. Homan, naturally have connected itself with another part of his remarks, wherein he seems to believe that he has exposed a fresh instance of inconsistency in me. But, first, of the *forcing*. Who forced Mr. Sheridan to have a meeting of his friends at Somerset Place, on the Sunday evening preceding the meeting at the Crown and Anchor? Who *forced* his friends to call that meeting? Who *forced* him to go to that meeting? Who *forced* a *committee* to be formed, with his *own* attorney, Mr. Burgess at the head of it? Had all this not been done by himself, never would he have entered into my mind as a candidate for Westminster. So that, as to the *forcing*, all that I wished to do was (since no other man was to be found) to make him stick to the collar, after he himself had voluntarily thrusted his head into it; and, when he proved jadish, was I not, gentlemen, warranted in lashing him?—— Now, as to the *cause* of this jadishness, Mr. Homan states, as a proof of my inconsistency, that, in my former letters to you, I had expressed a conviction, that, from the beginning, there had been an understanding between Mr. Sheridan and the Duke of Northumberland's Steward, Mr. Wilson, to deliver you, bound, hand and foot, into the hands of Lord Percy. Next he states, that he, upon the authority of Mr. Sheridan, told me that this was not the case; and that I still persevered in my opinion. But, that, since the last election, I have said, that it "now appears from unquestionable authority, "that I was *in error* upon that point, and "that there had been no such understand-"ing." Gentlemen, can you perceive any inconsistency in this? But, *why* did I change my first opinion? *Why* do I *now* believe that there was no such understanding, having before rejected the solemn assurances of Mr. Sheridan, conveyed to me and to the public, through Mr. Homan? Because I am now told by Major Cartwright that Mr. Wilson says there was no such understanding; and, if I believe Mr. Wilson in preference to Mr. Sheridan, the latter may find fault with my taste, but certainly has no ground whereon to maintain against me a charge of inconsistency.——Having refuted the charge of inconsistency, I will not, like poor Mr. Chalmers upon the subject of the Pursuits of Literature, take up your time in an endeavour to shew, that my former opinion, though proved to be erroneous, ought to have been correct; but, I must just observe, that, if Mr. Sheridan's conduct, upon the occasion referred to, was not ascribable to the motive then supposed, he does not gain much with us from the statement of Mr. Homan, who ascribes it to the influence of his Whig friends, joined to the dreaded power of the ministers and the known wish of an "illustrious personage." In one case as in the other you were, by him, delivered into the hands of Lord Percy; all the difference being, with respect to himself, that, in the former case, selfishness and knavery, and, in the latter, vanity and folly, must have been the preponderating ingredients in his conduct.

Mr. Homan inserts two sentences, taken from two separate letters of mine to you, in the former of which, written on the 25th of September, I observe, that there was a paragraph in one of the ministerial papers, threatening Mr. Sheridan with *the loss of his place* if he opposed Lord Percy, and I add, "*my opinion is, that such would have been the case.*" Then he contrasts this with a sentence in my letter of the 9th of October, wherein I say, that "if, *in such a cause*" (having before dwelt upon the nature of the cause and pointed out the manly line of conduct which he ought to have pursued) "Mr. "Sheridan had had the courage to expose "his places and his seat, *no minister in Eng-*"*land would have dared to touch either.*" Now, gentlemen, this, taken at the very utmost, amounts to no more than a change of opinion; and as such I would leave it, especially as it will manifestly appear, from a reference to the letters in question, that the change did not arise from any desire to maintain what was not true. But, when you consider, that, between the 25th of September and the 9th of October, the meetings at the Crown and Anchor had taken place, and had given proof of a great ferment in the minds of the people of Westminster; and when you perceive, that, in the last quoted letter, I had been supposing a case, in which Mr. Sheridan would have thrown himself upon your protection, setting all Whig cronies and all Carleton-house politics at defiance, a case far different from the one supposed in the first letter, where he was regarded as merely seeking his own views, clinging all the while to his party connec-

ions; when you consider these circumstances, gentlemen, I am persuaded Mr. Homan will not obtain from you even the credit of having detected in me a change of opinion.

In page 60 of the preceding sheet, Mr. Homan copies my letter to Mr. Sheridan upon my arrival in Westminster, just previous to the election. What do I say in that letter? Why, that *I prefer Mr. Sheridan to the ministerial creature, the Pittite Commodore*; and that Mr. Paull *does not mean to be considered as opposed to Mr. Sheridan.* This was the truth; and I said, at every stage of the election, "give me Sheridan in preference to Hood;" because it was evident, that this latter was set up by the ministers alone, and for the crafty purpose of stealing the votes of unthinking people by the exhibition of a shortened arm, and thus to shut out some man who might have been actually in the House, and upon whose conduct the people would have had their eyes. This sentiment was never, as you well know, disguised by me upon any occasion; and, in no one instance did I ever ask an elector for his second vote, if his other vote was promised to Hood, compared with whom, as to this transaction, Mr. Sheridan is, in my opinion, an angel of light. "I hate the Pittite Commodore," was a phrase repeated by me fifty thousand times, and I repeat it now, upon mature reflection, with as much sincerity as ever. All this you know well. It has been stated before in print; and, indeed, my letter to Mr. Sheridan, above referred to, is now brought forward by Mr. Homan, not for the purpose of showing, that we wanted to *split votes* with Mr. Sheridan (the object which it was at first published for), but, in order to suspend me, as he is so good as to call it, upon one horn or the other of a dilemma.——As *how*, think you, Gentlemen? Why, after having cited my letter, he quotes a part of a sentence, which, in his brogue, he calls a paragraph, from my first letter to Mr. Windham, thus: "The cup of his (Mr. "Sheridan's) ambition was just touching "his lips, when we came and dashed it to "the ground." Now, says he, either Mr. Cobbett was insincere, in his letter to Mr. Sheridan, or he has here published a boastful after-thought; so that, I am told to take my choice between "base hypocrisy," and vain-boasting. Verily, if I were to acknowledge the latter charge to be just, I think Mr. Homan's example ought, with his friends at least, to keep me in countenance; for, I should try my hand a long while, before I should be able to match him in this way. But, as I by no means covet the honour of such society, I must insist, that while I was, as I have before stated, perfectly sincere in my letter to Mr. Sheridan, I was as perfectly correct in my statement relating to our having disappointed the ambition of that gentleman. We did dash the cup of his ambition from his lips; we did this, and he well knows it; we sunk him, and for ever sunk him, as a popular character; we put him down, never to rise, nor even to peep up again: but, because such was the result of his double-dealing and his folly, and of our frankness, resolution, activity, and superior talents, is it thence to be concluded, that, before the contest began, we *wished* that such should be the result? We wished to see him succeed against the yellow-ribboned Pittite; we wished to see him in parliament in preference to that ministerial creature; we wished not to extinguish him; in the hours of our brightest hopes, in the hours of our greatest confidence, sorrow for "poor Sheridan," was a general, if not an unanimous, sentiment; but, if, in our exertions to support Mr. Paull, we did extinguish him, shall we not be permitted to state it, without exposing ourselves to the charge of vain boasting?

Another charge, which Mr. Homan prefers against me, is, that I *refused* to insert in my Register, a letter of Mr. Rodwell, one of Mr. Sheridan's most active and zealous friends. And, gentlemen, when you have read Mr. Rodwell's letter, in page 62, I must beg to call your recollection to the circumstances, whence it arose. Mr. Sheridan, after he had had the unexampled meanness to form a coalition with the Pittite Commodore, began to feel the severity of our stripes; for, to say the truth, we did not spare him. Boiling with revenge, and having no fair means of vengeance, he gave it out, and even stated in print, that he would publish a letter, wherein I, in behalf of Mr. Paull, had offered to split votes with him. Of this I accused him one day when he had been, by his friends, prevailed upon to show his face at the hustings. After a good deal of faultering about the matter, out came my letter in print, together with another private letter, which Mr. Paull had, about the same time, written to Mr. Finnerty, whom Mr. Sheridan, the "delicate" Mr. Sheridan, as Mr. Homan calls him, had, in an unguarded moment, I hope, prevailed over so far as to join him in this new and high-blooded species of political warfare; and, that the manner of the publication might be worthy of the act itself, *Peter Moore* was chosen as the herald. Mr. Sheridan had said, that he treated our proposition with *scorn*; but, hoping that I had lost his answer to my letter, he *sup-*

pressed it in his publication, and was much surprized when he soon after saw it in print, *thanking* me for my frankness, as will appear from the copy of the letter inserted in my 10th volume, page 758. In commenting upon this unparalleled instance of "gentlemanly" conduct, I took occasion to state, that though *we* had made no such overtures to him, *he* had, through Mr. Rodwell, one of his committee, made such an overture to us, and that, too, at the very time, when his coalition with the Pittite Commodore must have been in agitation; in answer to which proposition, I, on behalf of Mr. Paull, told Mr. Rodwell, that that gentleman had all along resolved not to have any connection with either of the other candidates, a resolution to which he still adhered. See the letter in Vol. X. p. 808. Rodwell, therefore, when he saw the private letters of Mr. Paull and me, published with a view of making the world believe, that we had proposed a coalition, went to both Peter Moore and Mr. Sheridan, showed them this letter of mine, and begged them to print it also, *which they refused*; and, when he offered it for publication, at the press of the no-less-delicate Mr. Perry of the Morning Chronicle, it was rejected, upon the pretext, that the editor was not at home. After this statement, not a word of which can be denied, it does, indeed, require no scanty stock of brass for a partizan of Mr. Sheridan to accuse me of a want of fairness in refusing to insert that letter of Mr. Rodwell, which will be found in page 62, and which, as the reader will perceive, was intended to show, that Mr. Rodwell was not one of Mr. Sheridan's committee, as I had supposed, and that his proposition to Mr Paull was made without Mr. Sheridan's knowledge. Supposing me to have *refused* insertion to this letter, should I not have been fully justified after the conduct of Mr. Sheridan, Peter Moore, and their hireling printer, Mr. Perry, in whose paper, observe, nothing of Mr. Paull's was to be inserted without *paying for it* at a most exorbitant and scandalous rate? No, gentlemen; I should not; and, I trust, you will never hear me plead in my defence, the example of "*the Right Honourable*" Richard Brinsley Sheridan. Let *him* publish private letters for the purpose of falsehood and suppress the answers to those letters. Let him, like the mountebank, play off his thousands of tricks, while I like the tailor, follow my honest profession; and I shall, like the latter who had, in the days of sun-shine, been mocked by the former, see him, if the pinching times overtake us, an object of compassion at my feet. No; I plead no such example. The facts with respect to Mr. Rodwell's letter are these. You will see by its date, that it was written on the 16th of November. The 16th of November was a *Sunday*. Of course, it could not possibly have appeared in the Register until a week afterwards, which brought us to the 22d of November; and you know, gentlemen, that *the election ended on Wednesday, the 19th of November.* After Wednesday, I had to write the Register of the next Saturday, which must always be in the printer's hands by Friday noon. Refer to what I wrote that week, and say if you think I had much time to bestow upon the unimportant letter of Mr. Rodwell. To say positively that the letter was not presented to, or sent to me, is more than I should like to do, when I consider how many, I may say many hundreds, of objects were, during that week, pressing upon my mind; but, I do not recollect that it was; I do not believe that it was; and I positively assert, that I never *refused* it admission; because I never in my life refused admission to any thing containing a complaint against myself, provided it came in an authenticated shape. The result is, that, if the letter had been inserted, it could not *possibly* have done Mr. Sheridan any good, or us any harm, the election being over some days before the letter would have appeared; that there could be no motive for my excluding it, as it contained a correction of a mere error as to the electioneering capacity of Mr. Rodwell, who, if not a committee man, was as active as if he had been; that the strong probability is, that the insertion of the letter never was applied for; and, that as to the *refusal*, as it is a fact which Mr. Homan could not *possibly* know of himself, he never having spoken to me in his life, and never having heard from me upon that subject, I shall, however painful the thought, be compelled to consider this high-blooded Bishop's nephew, though "nearly connected with one of the first families in this kingdom," the inventor as well as the promulgator of a wilful falshood, until he can produce *proof* of his statement having been grounded upon credible testimony.

By this time, gentlemen, you will have been satisfied, that Mr. Sheridan has got a hopeful defender.——There remains only one charge, and that is so grossly foolish as well as false, that I can hardly bring myself to waste a moment of your time upon it. But, as I have trespassed upon your indulgence with a refutation of all the rest, I may as well, by way of conclusion, notice this also.——Mr. Homan, at page 58, makes three extracts from my former letters to you, all

expressive of *my disapprobation of Lord Percy as a member for Westminster.* What he makes these extracts for it is utterly impossible for me to say; for, no contrast does he attempt to make; no inference does he draw, or suggest, or hint at. He goes on, indeed, through the whole letter, as I call it for want of a fitter name, stringing together extract upon extract, by the means of senseless copulative sentences, just like a journeyman Reviewer, who is employed to praise or condemn books at so much a yard, and who, when he carries his work home, has it regularly measured by his master. But, what, again I ask, could Mr. Homan string together these last-mentioned extracts *for*? I have heard of such a thing as an author's fingers moving on without any communication with the brain; and, though I must confess, that I have sometimes thought I could perceive, in the "leading articles" of the Morning Post, strong presumptive proof of such an operation, I never did, till now, arrive at what may properly be called a belief of the fact.——These extracts finished, in which, observe, I only say what I have all along said, and what I still say, about Lord Percy's election; these extracts finished, however, there appears to be a slight return of the effect of Mr. Homan's thinking faculties, which, as we shall presently see, operate, as usual, but very little to the benefit of his client. He quotes, from my letter to Mr. Windham (Vol. X. p. 808) the passage, wherein I state to that gentleman the substance of the Duke of Northumberland's Letter to the leading men in the parish and vestry of *St. Margaret*, as it was communicated to me by Mr. Stephenson, the vestry-clerk of that parish, and as it had been before communicated to Mr. Porter of Parliament Street, and the other churchwarden, the said letter stating, that the Duke was highly offended that the ministry could find no other man than Mr. Sheridan to be the colleague of Earl Percy, and that he could not bring himself to consent to his son's standing with *such a man as Mr. Sheridan.*——"Now," says Mr. Homan, "I shall, gentlemen" (for he has the incomparable assurance of addressing this to you) "bring forward an *evi-*" *dence* which must *effectually confute and* " *invalidate* the rash and unfounded asser-" tions of Mr. Cobbett, namely, a letter to " Mr. Sheridan, positively denying that any " such letter of the Duke of Northumber-" land had ever been received or seen by " Mr. *Staton*, Churchwarden of the parish " of . . . . . of *what*, think you? Why, of *St. Martin!*——Now, whether Mr. Homan himself thought that St. *Margaret* and St. *Martin* were the self-same saints, and that Mr. *Porter* and Mr. *Staton* were the self-same churchwardens; or whether he thought that you were not capable of distinguishing one from the other; and, whether Mr. Sheridan thought that a letter from the vestry of St. Martin was the readiest and the best evidence of what had been said and done in the vestry of St. Margaret; these are questions, that I will leave for you to determine; but, in the mean while, I think, I may safely affirm, that, taking the whole of this together, it exhibits an instance of impudence and of unprincipled falsehood, rarely to be met with even in a couple of Irish adventurers; and with this, gentlemen, reserving the Play-Actor's dinner for my next letter, I shall dismiss this "Ne-" phew of the Bishop of Killala," though " nearly allied to one of the best families in " this kingdom."

With a sincere prayer, gentlemen, that God may preserve your children and mine from any alliance with high-blood of *this sort*, and that we may be enabled to prevent the possessors of it from sucking out that which we now have in our veins,

I remain
Your faithful friend
And most obedient servant,
WM. COBBETT.

P. S.——It will, gentlemen, have occurred to you, how very just and fair it was, in this Mr. Homan, to work into an attack upon my consistency, a letter of *Mr. Paull*, in praise of Mr. Sheridan; a letter written at a time, when it is well known Mr. Paull was at seventy miles distance from me, and when I had not seen that gentleman for some months before. As to Mr. Paull's praises, in this instance, though I would not have joined in them, and though, if I had been at hand, I should have taken the liberty to dissuade him from publishing such a letter; yet, I am persuaded, that his praises were perfectly *sincere*, Mr. Paull always having differed in opinion with me as to the character of Mr. Sheridan, previous to the election; but, because Mr. Paull thought, generally speaking, well of that character *before* the election, was he to think well of it after he had seen Mr. Sheridan, whom, observe, he had praised as a friend to the *rights of the people*, meanly coalescing with the Pittite Commodore, and still more meanly soliciting the aid of such men as "Billy " Baldwin," after he had seen him publishing private letters for the purposes of spreading falsehood, and suppressing the answers, lest that purpose should not succeed; after having seen all this of him, was Mr. Paull

still to speak in his praise? Was it not, on the contrary, his duty to censure him, and to do whatever truth and justice would warrant to prevent him from being returned to parliament? Besides, it is meanness of the lowest description, to seize hold of a letter like that of Mr. Paull, and to reason upon it as a deliberate expression of his fixed opinion. The letter was evidently written in great haste; it was the offspring of zeal, rather than of reflection; and, though it may suit the purposes of the Sheridans to give a contrary turn to it, I am sure you will readily excuse an error in judgment, especially when proceeding from a warmth of heart. There is, however, one comfort for the Sheridans upon this score; and that is, if they will but forgive Mr. Paull for his praises this time, they may rest assured, that he never will offend in the like way again.——As I wish to dismiss Mr. Homan *for ever*, I will just beg you to observe, that he pretends, that he would have *written more*; that he would have made still greater exposures, if he had had *room*. "The space *allowed* me," says he, "is now full." And, at his conclusion, he says, "having now arrived at the limits "which Mr. Cobbett *allotted* me in the "*present number*," and then he signifies his intention of treating you and me with another letter. Now, gentlemen, observe, that it is *six weeks*, since he had my promise to insert his letters; that, on the 27th of December, I inserted his first letter; that, on the 1st of January I wrote to him to say, that I could not, in justice to my readers and to my work, allow him any more than *ten* columns more, and that, as to *time*, I would allow him *the two next numbers*, namely, those of the 3d and the 10th of January, that, in the Number of the 3d, I did, however, offer him *six* columns more (see page 32), but I positively insisted that he should *close* in the Number of the 10th, that is to say, in the Number published last Saturday. Yet he now sends me only *eight* columns, when he might have sent *sixteen*, and yet he has the assurance to complain of being straightened as to room! You will say, perhaps, "give him rope enough." I *have* given him enough. Every one must now be satisfied, that if I wanted to add to the disgrace of the Sheridans, I should encourage this their *defender* to proceed; but, those that are down to the bottom can be sunk no lower; and, as to any *amusement* which my twisting and tossing of this bungling advocate about might afford to some of us who were engaged in the Westminster election, it would, by my other readers, be regarded as too dearly purchased by the exclusion of matter of general interest and utility. For these reasons I shall beg leave to refer Mr. Homan to his friends, "the *highly respectable* gen-"tlemen of the daily papers," in whose boundless miscellanies his lucubrations may find circulation, and may stand recorded side by side with those of his brainless brethren, John Bowles and Redhead Yorke.

SUMMARY OF POLITICS.

CONTINENTAL WAR.——The fearful progress of this war being but too correctly given in the French bulletins, with which they, with malicious kindness, duly supply us, I should not think it necessary, at present, to make any observations upon the subject, did I not discover an intention in the daily prints (for now that Mr. Perry has got a place, they are *all* of a mind as to matters of this sort) to inculcate the opinion, that, whether from the force of arms or of sickness, Napoleon will be compelled to retreat before he has accomplished his purposes, and that there is a prospect even of his being defeated. His army is said to have the dysentery, as the Duke of Brunswick's had in Champagne, when he invaded France; but, I am sorry to perceive, that this disorder in the French, is not attended with one of the symptoms, with which it was attended in the Brunswicker's army, namely, that of impelling the patient to take to his heels——There is a passage in the Morning Chronicle, upon the subject, so truly savage and cowardly, that it must, one would think, have proceeded from the pen of Mr. Perry himself. It contains the expression of a hope, that the French soldiers may all be destroyed by this terrible disorder, and that, thereby, *we* may be freed from the danger of their arms! Reader, be assured, that, if a nation consisted wholly of men entertaining such sentiments, they must become the slaves of a conqueror, to which I will add, that they ought so to become. It is forbidden by the laws of war, as inhuman, to cause sickness in the army of your enemy; and, to wish for it, is to go as far as you are able in this path of inhumanity.—That the French may be obliged to retreat, that they may be beaten, that they may be killed by the arms of their enemies, who, I would *fain hope*, are our friends, it is natural and laudable to wish; but, a prayer that the pangs of death may come upon them through the means of disease; a prayer that we may be protected from their arms by their being, by disease, rendered incapable of coming at us, is fit to be addressed only to the devil. But, besides the baseness of such a prayer, is the extreme folly of it, as applied to the case before us;

for, if the French army be really (which I do not, however, believe) in a state so very sickly as that represented, is there any reason to suppose, that the armies of Russia and of Prussia (if the latter has any) are not equally sickly? The cause must be either in the season, or in the fatigues of the soldiers; and, will not the sea on operate upon the armies on both sides in the same way? or, is it likely, I should be glad to ask, that the fatigues of the French soldiers have been more harrassing or their fare harder, than those of the soldiers of their enemy?——What may be the result of such an undertaking no one can possibly be certain; but to me, there appears not the least prospect, that fortune, who has so long favoured Napoleon, has any intention to change sides. This is, however, but a foolish way of speaking. It is not *fortune*. It is superior genius on one side, aided by the disaffection or indifference of the people on the other side.

PROCEEDINGS IN PARLIAMENT. (Continued from page 49).—I. *India Affairs.*—II. *Slave Trade.*—III. *Army.*——I. In the House of Commons, on the 12th instant, LORD FOLKESTONE gave notice of a motion, to be made on that day fortnight, for the printing of the papers relative to *Lord Wellesley's transactions with the Nabob and principality of Oude;* and, it must have been with no little surprize, that Lord Howick was heard to begin an objection to it. The speech of the latter, as published in the Morning Chronicle, is the most extraordinary that I ever read. What did he mean by Lord Folkestone not having "laid sufficient parliamentary ground?" What is the meaning of this special-pleader-like phrase? The case is this: these same papers were printed before; a *charge* had been grounded upon them, laid before the House, put upon the journals, printed, and re-printed in the public papers, as may be seen by referring to page 885 of Vol. IX. of the Register; and yet Lord Howick is represented as having appealed to the *sensibility* of the House, whether it was fair "to circu-" late such *severe attacks* upon the character "of the *noble* person alluded to." He had been more than *alluded to*, my Lord Howick; he had been *named*. His name had been given at *full length*, and he himself had before feasted our eyes with his picture, as he did the people of Calcutta with his statue. Oh, the tender feelings of the noble person! Why not a little feeling, too, for the Nabob of Oude and the Polygars? They are not, to be sure, closely connected with Lord Grenville; but, they have feelings, I dare say. At any rate, as Lord Folkestone observed in reply, this was no objection at all; because, all the papers had already been circulated; and, as to that *effect* of the publication, which seemed to be anticipated by the tender concern of Lord Howick, I think, I could venture to assure his Lordship, that the effect, upon the mind of every honest and humane man in the kingdom is already as great as it possibly can be. There is only one circumstance that can add to it, and that is, an evident intention in the ministry (which I hope will not appear) of stifling the inquiry into this most important subject.—But, what did his lordship mean by "*severe attacks* upon "the character of the noble person?" In his anxiety to put a stop to the revival of the discussions upon this subject, he seems to have entirely overlooked the purport of Lord Folkestone's intended motion; for, the papers, intended to be moved for by his Lordship, consist entirely of *official documents*; of letters from and to Lord Wellesley, of negociation dispatches, nine-tenths of which were written by Lord Wellesley himself, or by his order! And, will my Lord Howick have us suppose, that these papers contain "*severe attacks*" upon his noble, noble friend? It was a blunder of some sot of a reporter. Lord Howick could never have said this.——Lord Folkestone *pledged* himself to prosecute the inquiry, if no one else would; and, my Lord Howick, *he* will *keep his word*. He has not been fashioned to the barefaced breaking of pledges. He has not been bawling for twenty years against a system, which pocketing the money of the people will induce him to support.——It has been said, that, to get rid of this discussion and its consequences was one of the reasons for dissolving the Parliament. I hope the assertion will prove unfounded; but, I must confess that my lord Howick has given me some fears upon the subject.——II. A bill is going through the House of Lords for the total *abolition of the Slave Trade*; and Lord Grenville has stated, that, in order to remove the objection, that other powers, if we did not, would carry on the traffic, negociations were entered into with France upon the subject, and that to abolish it on both sides was actually agreed on as a provision in the new treaty with America.——Every thing that can be said upon this subject has been said; and all that I shall say, at present is, to express my conviction that the measure will prove dreadfully injurious to our colonies; to the *only* colonies that are worth our care; and, that, since the abolition of slavery is begun, I hope the ministers will think of the

Whites as well as the *Blacks*, begging leave to remind them, that the number of *paupers* in England and Wales, the number *added to our stock of paupers since Pitt began his career of power*, is *greater* than that of *the whole black population of our West India Islands*; and, that these paupers are harder worked (such of them as are able to work), and worse fed, than are the slaves in the West Indies, I am at any time prepared to prove. But, not a word of answer can you get upon this subject from any of them. The taxing and pauperizing system *must* go on; their places and pensions *must* be regularly paid. There is a sort of over-ruling necessity for this; but, it is very cheap to them to make a parade of humanity, in cases where they themselves are not likely to be affected.——Since, however, we must have *emancipation*, why not begin *in Ireland?* Mind, *I* do not recommend the measure; where are the pledges of Mr. Grey and Lord Grenville upon this score? and how came Mr. Fox to be so quiet about it?——Below I insert a letter from a West Indian. It contains a curious fact; and though I do not quite agree in the comment upon it, I could wish to see Lord Holland, for whom I entertain unfeigned respect, cause the fact itself to be contradicted.——Of the tyranny and the slavery in the *East Indies* we seem to think nothing at all. The bloody works carried on there, the capricious and sanguinary tyranny, if the news-papers speak truly (which I hope they do not), make the deeds attributed to Napoleon shrink into nothingness. But of this more hereafter.——III. On the 12th instant Lord Castlereagh made a motion for papers and returns relative to the "military "force." This is what we may call a standing dish. "The opposition," as the Morning Chronicle dubs three or four clerks turned out of the Treasury, will never object to any grants of the public money; they will perfectly agree with the ministry about Lord Wellesley; they will join them in carrying on a war of extermination for Hanover; they will even go before them in any measures, if such, contrary to my hopes and expectations, should be adopted, for stifling the liberty of speech and of the press; but, about the military measures, in discussing which they will be sure not to fall foul of their own projects and profits, they will always have a great deal to say. But, the misfortune for them is, that, of this the people are weary. The only branch of the military about which the public are very much concerned, is, the *Hanoverian branch*; and here the ousted clerks will be so far from opposing the ministry, that they will be their rivals in praising the measure.

LLOYD'S FUND, and several valuable communications from correspondents, must be deferred till my next; and, when I look at these communications, I cannot but feel provoked at myself for having bestowed so large a portion of my room upon that incomparable dunce, Mr. Homan.

SLAVE TRADE.

Jamaica, Nov. 3, 1806.

SIR,——The decided aversion which you have ever shewn to the time serving professions, and accommodating principles of our political leaders, whether headed by the son of Chatham, or the hero of the Whig club, induces me to hope you will make public the following fact, which will place in a true light the disinterested conduct of a violent declaimer against the slave trade.—Among those who declared their abhorrence of this traffic, and supported the resolutions of Lord Grenville in the Upper House, Lord Holland was one of the most conspicuous; as owner of a Jamaica plantation in right of his wife, he must have been listened to with particular attention. The admirers of Mr. Fox may have supposed that his nephew had too delicate feelings to encourage the sale of his sable brethren, and that he was willing to sacrifice his private interest at the altar of humanity. The world at large, and the majority of his brother peers, are probably less credulous, and may have drawn a conclusion from his conduct, that the abolition would not be injurious to the West Indian planters. I shall not now enter into any defence of the trade, but hope by pointing out the consistency of this rising statesman, to prevent others from being led away by his arguments.—On the 9th of October, 1806, the agent of Lord Holland attended at the public sale of the cargo of the ship Perseus, at Montego Bay in this island, and purchased several slaves for his lordship's plantation, and in so doing must have acted in conformity with his lordship's orders. This transaction requires but few comments, but will confirm your repeated admonitions, that little confidence should be placed in the professions of men in power. It was no repugnance to dealing in human blood, (as it is sometimes termed) that caused Lord Holland to come forward as an advocate for the abolition, for he has himself become a purchaser of his fellow creatures, and still holds them in slavery. No, Sir, it was because he found he could follow his own party in the pursuit of popularity, without injuring his own possessions, and wisely takes measures at the

same moment to counteract the evil to himself. Lord Holland feels that he has now a sufficiency of negroes for the cultivation of his estate during his tenure. Nay, the abolition of the slave trade may do him comparative good, by ruining the estates of his neighbours who have not had the same means of being as provident as his lordship; and in proportion as the West Indies make less sugar his own will be of greater value.—It appears to me extraordinary that the gentlemen of the United Kingdom, should have feelings so tremblingly alive to the sufferings of negroes. Why ransack the tropics for objects of compassion? Are the complaints of the Highlander unfounded? Or, is there no misery in an English workhouse? If the traffic in mankind distress them, why not endeavour to put a stop to the sale of Irishmen in the Delaware? Surely, Sir, it would be as humane, and a little less presumptuous if they would exert their benevolence at home, and would not meddle with the colonies.—We have many and active enemies to contend with; it is almost forgotten on one side of the Atlantic, that a reliance on the good faith of the British nation induced our forefathers to leave their native country, and risk their lives and fortunes in this inhospitable climate, and I see and deplore, for that is all I can do, the ruin of myself and fellow colonists determined on. To you who have ever reprobated the conduct of our persecutors, allow me as an individual to express my thanks. A sense of right alone can have led you to support our cause; our grievances would be but few, if our fate depended on men actuated by the same principles.—A West Indian.

THE PLACE-HUNTER'S PHILOSOPHY.

Sir,——I am a constant reader of your Register, and have therefore the means of forming some opinion of your public principles; I am persuaded you would never suffer political sophistry to establish itself over political truth, while you possessed the power (for I am persuaded you will ever have the will) to prevent it; under this conviction, I have taken the liberty to request your insertion of this letter.——On reading the leading article in the Morning Chronicle of the 16th of December, I there perused a shallow effort to reconcile all classes of people to the hardships under which they labour; its sophistical reasoning, however ill adapted to the end, was designed to produce resignation to national rigour, or rather a peaceful submission to gradual ruin. Among other passages I met with this extraordinary one; "He who talks of the poverty of Eng-" land, of the number of paupers, and so " forth, talks of the evils inseparable from " a highly cultivated, highly industrious " community, where labour and idleness, " virtue and vice, wealth and poverty, are " mixed as in all societies in large proportions. But he who imputes these things " to war, speaks the language of ignorance " or faction."——I must confess I should have been surprised had I perused such sentiments a year ago, in the same paper, but looking to some late changes to the advantage of Mr. Perry, and the probable anticipation of a few others connected with him, it will not astonish you, Sir, if I presume, that gratitude on the one side, and interested hopes on the other, have, by their united efforts brought about this change, and at the same time, the wonderful discovery, that war and all its heavy calls upon a country have nothing to do with the poverty that follows it. The doctrine is good enough, considering the views it has, for places and pensions now existing, and also others which the wisdom of our rulers may think proper to establish hereafter, must be paid, and since the *people* must pay them, why it is as well to make them think, if we can make them think so, that it is not by calling on them for their money that they become poor, because, when they are persuaded that they lose nothing by losing that, they will not care how much is taken from them; and this is by no means an uncomfortable philosophy for pensioners and sinecure holders to inculcate, and when they are fatigued with the labours of their heavy duty, it will be a kind of philanthropic recreation, to reconcile their countrymen to a poverty which is inseparable from them.——But, in answer to this quoted passage, it seems to me, Sir, that if a man work all day, and can just earn enough to maintain himself and family, that he should not be classed among the idle, or extravagant, and for no other reason, than because the calls of government have at length rendered his earnings insufficient. If the exigence of a nation take from him half the means of his bare support, who will pretend to deny that that exigence has brought the poverty upon him. If, indeed, the value of labour increased in proportion with the unavoidable demands upon property, then to be poor would be a presumptive proof of idleness or extravagance; but if the calls upon him increase while his means are limited, let him perish in want, if the necessity for it can be sanctioned in public justice, but let us not insult him in his wretched condition, either by proclaiming his idleness as the cause of his ruin, or maintaining that his ruin is inseparable from him.—The

question is not whether poverty would exist without war, for it would be ridiculous to suppose no other cause; but whether war do not increase its influence, and while it gives abundant wealth to hundreds, involves millions into poverty, and thousands into absolute want. If war can do this, (as in my opinion it evidently has done) I impute to it all our additional individual poverty, and assert, that whoever denies to it a share in this destruction, speaks the language (I will not say of faction) but of an interested perversion of common sense. I do not speak against the propriety of bearing with patience the consequent evils of a necessary war, but I would have effects, (whenever attempted to be explained) traced to their proper source, and if I be reduced to beggary, by conceived national necessity, let me have the credit at least of not having ruined myself by my *own imprudence.*——But the Morning Chronicle has its own views to answer, and fearing that our increased individual poverty, might be attributed to the system of augmenting taxation, and knowing that to prevent the continuance of such a measure, a lopping-off of sinecures and unmerited pensions must necessarily ensue, (a circumstance, which, if I be not mistaken, would damp its own self-interest, and remove much of the influence of its ministerial support), has endeavoured to establish that poverty and want are never the result of a mismanaged government, but exist, merely because "they are inseparable from highly cultivated communities," thus by making them appear indiscriminately to be the consequence of vice and not of necessity, takes from the victims of a pernicious system their last, their only stay from absolute ruin; I mean compassion, for that would create investigation, and investigation might ultimately end in justice. It is to cut off this that such sophistry is introduced, because the places and pensions of our *mock patriots* would otherwise stand upon a tottering base; for thousands of industrious families must be allowed but a scanty meal, if the tables of such spungers are to teem with luxury, and many an uncomfortable dwelling, (by degrees become so) must at length disgorge the wretched bed of its inhabitants, that such may sleep on down.—— The Morning Chronicle when it speaks of the poverty inseparable from a nation, argues as if fatality had established it, and that it was not the result of natural causes; but, it should remember, that while imperfection is inseparable from the order of things, no *particular* evil is doomed to be the consequence of it, and though the utmost stretch of human ability can never produce perfection, its being limited does not impower us to name the particular evils which it cannot remove. But, supposing that poverty were inseparable from a highly industrious nation, where does the Morning Chronicle mean to draw the line of limitation to it? Or, does it mean that the continual expansion of it is likewise inseparable? But, though such may be the opinion of the Morning Chronicle, does it therefore follow that it is ignorance or faction to differ about the truth of it? Yes, to be sure it is, for who could be so foolish or so wicked as to presume that war or increasing taxes, or hundreds of thousands yearly applied to sinecures and unmerited pensions, or any such innocent things, could have any hand in producing poverty amongst us? Suppose, for the sake of argument, a great improbability,—that a peace were established, and that a large reduction were to take place in our national expense; or, a still greater improbability,—that on such a reduction half of the present taxes were repealed; supposing this, I say, would any body be so ridiculous as to suppose, that he would be the richer for having fewer demands upon his property, or having in his pocket, at his own disposal, half the value of his present yearly taxes; if there be one so ridiculous, let him read the Morning Chronicle, and he will find that poverty is inseparable from his country, and that if he think that the conclusion of the war, and the reduction of taxes, have made him less poor than during the war, that he is either an ignorant or a factious subject. —If you think I have treated the subject as it deserves, you will perhaps indulge me with the insertion of it in your valuable Register, the almost only remaining record of candour and truth.——MARCUS.

REFORMING MINISTRY.

SIR,——I have not been an inattentive observer of the acts springing from the present administration since their accession to power; and, I have witnessed them with inexpressible regret, because I hoped to have seen the country restored to its original strength and vigour, by a reformation of the gross abuses existing in it; brought on and increased to such an alarming degree, for so many years past, by former bad and wicked ministers, I had fondly cherished the hope of seeing the vigorous and virtuous plans so eloquently urged by Mr. Fox in the House of Commons, put into practice; that a motive might have been given to the people to bear those grievous burdens imposed on them by the wasteful minister, who, happily is dead, and additions to them, which it was out of the power of Mr. Fox or of the wisest and

most virtuous minister on earth to have avoided, under the circumstances of the time when he came into office.—You have done me the honour of inserting in your Register my sentiments on a former occasion; I then stated, I did not expect it possible (to use a hacknied metaphor) they could cleanse the Augean stable at once. No; such a work requires time and much patience; but, I did expect that we should have seen those steps taken towards the accomplishment of the plans as would give all honest men hopes that it would be as speedy as such a task would allow.—When the coalition was announced, I felt somewhat alarmed, lest the Grenville party in the cabinet should be the stronger of the two, (for I consider the Addingtons as mere appendages to that than to either in particular) and I regret to see their principles predominate, and those of Mr. Fox give way in almost every instance. From the openness and sincerity of his heart, I am convinced it was his wish to do all he had promised the people he would do; and it is to be regretted, he had not been more firm under *particular circumstances* which came to my knowledge at the formation of this administration. That the wishes of the Grenvilles were entirely despotic, desiring no other than power, and to use that power for their own advantage to the certain expense of the people, I do not hesitate to declare as my firm belief. It is not prejudice, to believe the principle of power without control to be inherent in that family and their party, for their history proves it to be so; and the cry of Jacobin, Democrat, and Anarchist, revived by the hireling prints of the day is music in their ears. With such a mixture, what hopes have we left for any reform in our abuses? Have we not seen Mr. Fox induced, by this faction, on one day, to be the bearer of a bill to the House of Commons that Lord Grenville might be enabled to hold a sinecure (with all his other riches) and the next to propose fresh burdens on the people, and call on them to forego almost their necessaries of life, to contribute——to what? not to the exigencies of the state only, but to my Lord Grenville's sinecure. Have we not seen him propose fresh grants to the princes of the blood, and at the same time call on the people to make greater sacrifices? Did he not propose the exemption of the King from the tax on his money in the funds? when he forces even the day-labourer to contribute to the state in the same proportion as a man of 20,900l. a year. It will be said he has established boards of inquiry into the unaccounted millions of the former administration; so have they been established by others, and to little purpose. I say this is nothing more than adding to that power of the crown, which power ought to be abridged, and creating new places for their hungry followers at the expense of the people, becrase they had not others to give them. Would Mr. Fox have made the declaration he did, about Hanover, if he had been out of power, or free from the shackles of the Grenville faction? Most assuredly his former sentiments are in direct opposition to that declaration. These acts, Mr. Cobbett, I do not attribute to the want of principle in Mr. Fox or a less desire than ever to do the people good—but I attribute it to a hope that by giving way in these measures, he might, at a future opportunity retrieve the rights of the people, and restore to them the power of electing their own representatives. I attribute it to his coalescing with a party who hate the people, and notwithstanding Mr. Whitbread's letter, I most cordially agree with Sir Francis Burdett, that the history of the world bears out the assertion, that coalitions of factions or parties are made at the expense of the people.—This I have thought long ago; and though it did not strike me at the time, an expression, which fell from the lips of one of their underlings, has made a due impression on my mind since, who expressed his thanks most fervently, that the people had nothing to do with this change.—I do not mention many other circumstances which have occurred since the union of these parties. The conduct of Lord Henry Petty on Mr. Robson's motions not only shews their unwillingness that any of the abuses should be pryed into; but how a plain honest question will expose and puzzle a minister if he acts against principle. It was playing the Doctor over again in the farce of the Sick and Hurt Bill for 19*l.* 10*s.* These acts, Sir, have totally destroyed all hopes of the promised reform so much looked for by the friends of rational liberty.—By reform I do not mean those visionary theories of a few ignorant beings who bawl about what they do not understand; but a restoration to our ancient rights, a proper representation of the people, and a disposition in ministers to listen to their voices. We are now called upon to elect a new House of Commons long before their usual time—whether it is that ministers were afraid of the last, lest they should disapprove of their conduct in the late negociation or any other circumstance I do not pretend to say, for we have not seen the papers, and it would be wrong

to condemn them unheard. This, however, I suspect to be the case, that if they had suffered the last Parliament to remain and vote the war, at the time when it expired, the people would have been more exhausted and consequently more dissatisfied with it. Under such circumstances a minister would not be very popular in the country, and therefore he dissolves the Parliament at the commencement of the war, and should the people hereafter grumble it will be thrown on themselves; for that *they*, as the theory supposes, will pledge themselves to the crown to carry on the war I have little doubt.—A. E —*Nov.* 8, 1806.

EAST INDIA COMPANY.

SIR,——As yours is the only paper that has attempted to undeceive the public, as to the great advantages derived to the country from the East India Company, and to point out the many abuses which are practised in virtue of their charter, I am in hopes you will give insertion to a few remarks, which I think the present conduct of the Company most loudly calls for —The East India Company is bound by act of parliament to provide a certain quantity of tonnage, for what is called the private trade; and for this purpose they have hitherto assigned a certain number of their extra ships, (no private merchant being allowed to ship in those denominated regular), but this year it so happens that they have no extra ships at home, nor are any expected before March next, though in the regular course, they ought by this time to have been ready to leave the Thames on another voyage to India. The cause of this delay is pretty well known to be the poverty of the Company's Treasury abroad, which has prevented their agents from having investments ready for the ships, at the usual seasons for Europe; but, as this is foreign to the subject of the present letter, I shall not enlarge on it; what I have now to complain of is, the want of attention shewn by the Company in providing tonnage out to India, for the present season.—The applications for tonnage from the private trade this season, amount to about 8000 tons; the Company to answer this, have taken up two of their regular ships, which, at the outside, cannot carry more than 2000 tons; and have intimated to the private traders that this is all the freight they can allow them; the consequence is, that a merchant must pare down his orders, so as to make the shipment of them of little or no value to himself or his correspondents, or else confine himself to one or two particular articles. This inconvenience which has been gradually increasing, is so severely felt, that many of the principal houses have been in the habit of investing their money in bills and dollars, and remitting them to their correspondents in India for the purchase of produce, rather than have their shipments curtailed in the manner I have mentioned. Independent of all this, the Company possess the right of limiting the exportation of all articles not the growth or manufacture of Great Britain, and they have in their late regulations declared, that no one person shall load on any ship more than 50 chests of wine, or 50 hogsheads of beer, the former of these articles certainly comes within their jurisdiction, but what right they have to lay their interdict on the latter I know not, nor can I discover the policy of it, excepting that beer is a bulky article, and they have no freight to spare.—The whole of their shipping regulations are vexatious in the extreme, and no part of them more so, than that clause which says, "all applications for freight shall be made on the first Wednesday of September, December, and March, and any application made in the intermediate months, will be considered only in the ensuing quarter." So; that were a packet to arrive to-morrow from India with large orders for goods, as the first Wednesday in December is past, leave to ship them could not be obtained for three months, by which time the markets may have fluctuated so as to render the shipping of them at all imprudent. —You will, I have no doubt, be surprised to hear, (unless you know it already) that no private trader is allowed to export the staple commodity of the country, woollen manufactures; the reason is, the Company are bound by their charter to export annually woollen goods to a certain amount, half a million, I believe; and, as this is generally a losing trade to them, they have imposed this restriction on the private merchants, for fear of lowering the markets still more.—I could fill up the whole of your Register with a detail of the abuses occasioned by this charter; but, as I am sensible of having trespassed too much already on your indulgence, I shall only observe, that at a time like the present, when the country requires every aid that commerce can giver her, it is not only impolitic, but unjust, to suffer the East India Company to destroy a trade, which if properly protected, would so materially benefit our manufactures, and increase the revenue, and which it has been clearly proved the Company cannot carry on.——I am, Sir, yours, &c.——R. N.——*London, Dec.* 18, 1806.

FOREIGN OFFICIAL PAPERS.

CONTINENTIAL WAR. —— *Fifth Bulletin of the Grand French Army. (Concluded from page 64)*

At break of day the whole army was under arms. Gazan's division was disposed in three rank, the left on the level height. Buchet's division formed the right, the imperial guards occupied the summit of a height. Each of these corps had their artillery in the little spaces between.——From the town and the neighbouring valleys, the passes had been discovered by which the troops which could not be placed upon the level height might extend themselves in the easiest manner, and this is surely the first occasion when an army had to defile through so small a pass.—A thick fog obscured the day. The Emperor passed before the different lines; he commanded his soldiers to take care of the Prussian cavalry, which had been described so extraordinary; he bade them remember that a year was not elapsed since Ulm was taken; that the Prussian army, like the Austrian then, was surrounded, had been driven from their line of operations, and lost their magazines; that they at the present moment no longer fought for honour but for retreat; that they alone sought to make themselves an opening upon different points, and that the corps of the army which should let them pass, would lose its honour and its glory.——To these inspiriting words the soldiers answered, with a loud cry of "Let us onward!" The light troops began the action. They opened a very brisk fire. Good as was the position of the enemy he was nevertheless driven out; and the French army marched out in the plain and began to arrange itself in battle.—The enemy's army, which, on their side, had no other view than to fall on whenever the fog should have cleared up, took up their arms. An army of 50,000 men from the left wing, posted itself to cover the defiles of Naumburgh, and to get possession of the Pass of Koefenues commanded by Marshal Mollendorf and the Prince of Orange.—The general staff is occupied in preparing an official relation, which shall make known, with every detail, all the different corps and regiments that have distinguished themselves; to entitle them to the esteem and acknowledgments of the nation, if any thing are wanting, they have testified it amply in the enthusiasm and loyalty they have shewn for their Emperor, in the thickest of the fight.—As one moment there was room for a doubt, every mouth at once was filled with the universal cry of "Long Live the Emperor!" a sentiment which ran through every heart in the midst of the battle. The Emperor, seeing his wings threatened by the cavalry, set forward at full gallop, to the spot, to direct other manœuvres, and order a change of front. He was every moment annoyed with the shouts of "Long live the Emperor!" The imperial foot guards, enraged not to be allowed to press on while they saw that every other corps was in motion, several voices among them cried out "forward!" "What iis this?" said the Emperor; "This came from none other but some beardless boy, that will give orders independent of me: let him wait till he has commanded in thirty-battles, before he takes upon him to advise me."—In the heaviest of the fire, when the enemy had lost almost all his generals, it might be seen what Providence had done for us, which had spared our army. Not a man of distinction, on the side of the French, is injured or wounded. Marshal Lannes was grazed by a musket bullet on the breast, but escaped unhurt. Marshal Davoust had his hat and clothes shot through in several places with small bullets. The Emperor was continually surrounded, wherever he appeared, by the Prince of Neufchatel, Marshal Bessieres; the Grand Marshal of the Palace, Duroc; the Grand Master of the Horse, Caulincourt his Aids-de-Camp, and Equerry in Waiting. A part of the army did not fire a single shot. ——Erfurt is taken: the Prince of Orange Fulda, Marshal Mollendorf, several other generals, and a considerable number of the troops, are prisoners of war.

Twenty-second Bulletin of the Grand French Army. (Concluded from Vol. X. p 960.)

But this was already forestalled by Marshal Davoust. The two other armies, one amounting to 80,000 men strong, placed themselves before the French army, which was opening out from the level height of Jena. The mist hung over both armies, lasting two hours; but at length was dissipated by the brightness of the sun. The two armies mutually beheld each other, at the distance of less than cannon-shot. The left wing of the French army supporting itself against a village and the woods, was commanded by Marshal Augereau. The imperial guard shewed their fire upon the centre, which was maintained by Marshal Lannes; the right wing was drawn together out of the corps of Marshal Soult. Marshal Soult had nothing but a small corps of 3000 men, purely composed of troops which had arrived of his light corps.—The enemy's army was numerous, and displayed a fine cavalry; their manœuvres were exactly and rapidly executed. The Emperor had requested to

delay coming to an engagement for two hours, in order to watch the positions which the enemy should take after the action of the morning, and to give the necessary orders to the troops, especially the cavalry, which required the greatest care. But the impetuosity of the French was too ardent for him. Several battalions had begun to engage in the village of Hollstedt. He saw that the enemy was getting into motion to drive them out; he gave immediate orders to Marshal Lannes to march with expedition to the support of the village. Marshal Soult had attacked a wood on the right. The enemy having made a movement with his right wing upon our left, Marshal Augereau was commanded to repulse them, and, in less than an hour, the action was general. Two hundred and fifty, or three hundred thousand men, with seven or eight hundred pieces of artillery, scattered death in every direction, and exhibited one of the most awful events ever witnessed on the theatre of history. On one side, as well as on the other, every manœuvre was performed as if it were on a parade.——Among our troops there was not for a moment the least disorder: the victory became ours in this moment.

To be continued.

MR. CANNING'S AMENDMENT,

As published in the Courier Newspaper of the 22d December, 1806.— Concluded from p. 30.

XIII. That if we have not the triumph and satisfaction, as in former years of war, of offering to H. M. our congratulationson any signal and decisive victory by sea, we nevertheless reflect with just pride and acknowledgement, on the several distinguished instances in which the skill, valour, and intrepidity of British officers and seamen have been displayed in their usual lustre, and with their accustomed success, over equal or superior squadrons of the enemy. But we cannot help lamenting, in justice to the naval service, as well as to the interests of the country, that supiness or mismanagement, by which the pradatory squadrons of the enemy have been permitted to range, unchecked, among our West-India colonies, and to escape with impunity; and by which our commerce has been exposed, to a degree of annoyance highly injurious to the interest, and discreditable to the maritime superiority, of Great Britan.—XIV. With equal sorrow, and with no less astonishment, we have observed those delays and uncertainties, and that apparent perplexity and fluctuation of councils, which have marked the conduct of the War Department of the State, which have hitherto prevented the execution of those measures which Ministers persuaded the late Parliament to enact, and upon which they themselves professed so greatly to rely for the internal defence of the Empire; which have so long confined our expeditions within our own ports, and have rendered the military preparations of this Government at once ineffectual to the annoyance of the enemy, and a just ground of dissatisfaction and disappointment to the nation at large.—XV. We rejoice in the opportunity of congratulating his Majesty on the capture of that valuable and important Settlement, the Cape Good Hope, by those distinguished Officers, Sir D. Baird and Sir H Popham. We have, however, the consolation and gratification of being able to recal his Majesty's attention to acquisitions and achievements in the course of the present year, by which, notwithstanding the apparent inactivity of his Majesty's present servants, the credit of his Majesty's arms, by sea and land, has been sustained in the different quarters of the Globe. We congratulate his Majesty on the signal advantages obtained by his Majesty's arms in the Expedition under Sir H. Popham, and General Beresford, against the Spanish Settlement of Buenos Ayres; advantages which, if seasonably supported and diligently improved, must be in the highest degree valuable to this country, opening fresh channels of commercial enterprize, and affording new and increasing encouragement to British manufactures and navigation; advantages doubly important at a moment when the other markets of the world are attempted to be closed against us.—XVI. We reflect with heart felt exultation, on the brilliant victory obtained on the plains of Maida, by his Majesty's Land Forces, under the gallant and able conduct of Sir J. Stuart, over a French army, superior in numbers. We feel the full value of the seasonable check given by this splendid achievement to the overweening confidence of the enemy: and of the proof which it affords that the character and constitution of the British army were not inadequate, upon their ancient footing, to maintain unimpaired, the lustre of the British name, and the military glory of our ancestors.—XVII. That we shall nevertheless examine, with due attention and solicitude into the effect of that new system which the late Parliament were induced to adobt, for improving the character, as well as augmenting the amount of his Majesty's Regular Forces; willing to hope that we shall have the satisfaction of discovering an

improvement so striking, and an augmentation so rapid and abundant, as at once to have supplied all the deficiences arising from the disuse of such measures as have been either abolished or suspended, and to compensate for the certain, permanent, and large addition which they have necessarily occasioned to the military expenditure of the State.—XVIII We shall investigate with equal care, the state of our other military establishments, and particularly that of the Volunteers, the cheap, efficient, and patriotic defence of the United Kingdom; we trust and believe that we shall find them, in spite of all discouragement and discountenance, neither abated in zeal, nor, as yet, materially reduced in numbers, at a period when it appears but too probable that their services may be more than ever essential to their country.—XIX. That we are fully sensible of his Majesty's paternal affection for his subjects manifested in the regret which he expresses at being compelled to call upon them for sacrifices of so great an extent as may be necessary in the present crisis of affairs. That however painful the duty of imposing fresh burdens upon the people, we shall, however, not shrink from discharging it; satisfied as we are of the prevailing determination of all ranks of the community to submit with cheerfulness to the indispensible necessity of providing means for the continuance of a contest, in the issue of which public safety and private happiness are alike inseparably involved. —XX. That we earnestly wish it were in our power to close our address here. But we feel that we should be wanting as well in duty to his Majesty as in fidelity to that people, in whose name and on whose behalf we are proffering sacrifices unexampled in magnitude and indefinite in duration, if we were to disguise from his Majesty the deep and general sentiment which prevails respecting the measures which preceded and accompanied the late general election.—XXII. Far be it from us to question his Majesty's undoubted prerogative But we cannot reflect without concern and disapprobation upon the circumstances of surprise and deception which attended the sudden exercise of that prerogative in the dissolution of the late Parliment; and particularly upon the irreverent use of his Majesty's Royal name in a proclamation summoning the late Parliament to meet no fixed and no distant day, issued at a period, when the measure of dissolving that Parliament must already have been in contemplation.—XXIII. Connected also with this subject, we cannot forbear to notice rumours which strongly prevail throughout the country, of the most improper and unconstitutional interference of his Majesty's Ministers in the course of the late Elections; rumours at once highly discreditable and injurious to his Majesty's government, and to the independent character of Parliament.—XXIV. We hope that upon inquiry and examination they may be proved to he utterly unfounded: convinced as we are, that the tendency (though we trust not the effect) of such inteference, as is alledged, must have been to revolt and disgust the well-affected part of the community, and to sow distraction and discontent in place of that unanimity which is so loudly called for;—at a moment when the prosperity of the British Empire depends upon the consenting and cordial co-operation of all orders and description of the people. Convinced also, that it is our peculiar duty, as it is the common interest of all those who prize as it deserves, the inestimable blessing of a free form of goverment, to mark with our strongest reprehension a perversion of power which would be too well calculated to favour those delusive and dangerous theories which stigmatize the House of Commons as an inadequate representative of the people.—XXV. But while we feel this most unplesant duty forced upon us, in vindication of our own independence, and of the rights of those whom we represent, we humbly and earnestly entreat his Majesty to be persuaded, that neither this nor any other misconduct of his Majesty's Ministers can essentially affect the firm and settled purpose of this House and of the great body of the nation, to unite in that general cause, and against that common danger—in comparison with which all other considerations, however important in themselves, are at the present moment unfortunately, inferior and subordinate.—XXVI. And we venture confidently to assure his Majesty, that great and unexampled as are the difficulties and dangers which surround us, his Majesty possesses in the wealth and prosperity of his dominions, in the loyalty and firmness of his Parliment, in the bravery of his fleets and armies, and in the affection, zeal and courage of his people — resources which, if wisely called forth and diligently and judiciously applied, are yet amply sufficient to ensure the safety and honour of the British Empire, and to maintain the only remaining hope, under Divine Providence, for the restoration of the liberties and happiness of mankind.

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